



An Overview Of EPA's Strategic Plan



For More Information

You can find the full Strategic Plan on EPA's website at **<http://www.epa.gov/ocfopage/>**. You may also order printed copies of the Strategic Plan (EPA/190-R-97-002) from EPA's National Center for Environmental Publications and Information by calling 1-800-490-9198. The Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) is also developing a series of fact sheets on various components of EPA's planning, budgeting, analysis, and accountability process. For more information, please contact OCFO's Office of Planning, Analysis, and Accountability at 202 260-9302.



Purpose Of The Strategic Plan

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) developed its strategic plan to serve as a blueprint for taking the Agency into the 21st century. Our Strategic Plan charts our course for protecting human health and the environment over five years, from 1997 through 2001. It lays out our long-term goals and guides us in establishing the annual goals we will need to meet along the way. It allows us to measure how far we have come towards achieving our goals and to recognize where we need to adjust our approaches or directions. Finally, it provides a basis from which Agency managers can focus resources on the highest priority environmental issues and assure that we use taxpayer dollars effectively to achieve environmental results.

EPA submitted its Strategic Plan to Congress in 1997, as required under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA). GPRA requires federal agencies to revise their strategic plans at least once every three years, and EPA will be submitting a revised 5-year plan to Congress by September 2000.

EPA's Strategic Plan has a number of components. First, it presents our mission statement, and it establishes ten long-term Goals upon which we will focus our attention over the next five years. It emphasizes our intent to achieve these goals through new approaches that work better and cost less. The Strategic Plan also describes a number of innovative, high-priority Agency activities that cross over traditional media or program lines—such as the Children's Health Protection Program and the Environmental Justice Program. In addition, it presents a set of principles to guide us as we make decisions about our programs and the activities we will conduct to achieve our Goals.

Our Mission

Our mission statement determines the work of the Agency, so it lies at the center of all of our planning efforts. **EPA's mission is to protect human health and to safeguard the natural environment—air, water, and land—upon which life depends.**

Our strategic plan is the map we will follow to carry out our mission. It represents our commitment to our customers—the American people—to achieve environmental results, and it is our public statement of how we plan to do so. Each of us has a role to play in establishing and achieving EPA's environmental goals.

Ten Goals

To guide us and help keep us focused on our mission, the Strategic Plan defines ten long-term Goals. These ten Goals will shape our work—and the way that we plan, budget, and account for our work—over the next five years:

1 Clean Air

The air in every American community will be safe and healthy to breathe. In particular, children, the elderly, and people with respiratory ailments will be protected from the health risks of breathing polluted air. Reducing air pollution will also protect the environment, resulting in many benefits, such as restoring life in damaged ecosystems and reducing health risks to those whose subsistence depends directly on those ecosystems.

2 Clean And Safe Water

All Americans will have drinking water that is clean and safe to drink. Effective protection of America's rivers, lakes, wetlands, aquifers, and coastal and ocean waters will sustain fish, plants, and wildlife, as well as recreational, subsistence, and economic activities. Watersheds and their aquatic ecosystems will be restored and protected to improve human health, enhance water quality, reduce flooding, and provide habitat for wildlife.

3 Safe Food

The foods Americans eat will be free from unsafe pesticide residues. Children especially will be protected from the health threats posed by pesticide residues, because they are among the most vulnerable groups in our society.

4 Preventing Pollution And Reducing Risk In Communities, Homes, Workplaces, And Ecosystems

Pollution prevention and risk management strategies aimed at cost-effectively eliminating, reducing, or minimizing emissions and contamination will result in cleaner and safer environments in which all Americans can reside, work, and enjoy life. EPA will safeguard ecosystems and promote the health of natural communities that are integral to the quality of life in this nation.

5 Better Waste Management, Restoration Of Contaminated Waste Sites, And Emergency Response

America's wastes will be stored, treated, and disposed of in ways that prevent harm to people and to the natural environment. EPA will work to clean up previously polluted sites, restoring them to uses appropriate for surrounding communities, and respond to and prevent waste-related or industrial accidents.

6 Reduction Of Global And Cross-Border Environmental Risks

The United States will lead other nations in successful, multilateral efforts to reduce significant risks to human health and ecosystems from climate change, stratospheric ozone depletion, and other hazards of international concern.

7 Expansion Of Americans' Right To Know About Their Environment

Easy access to a wealth of information about the state of their local environment will expand citizen involvement and give people tools to protect their families and their communities as they see fit. Increased information exchange among scientists, public health officials, businesses, citizens, and all levels of government will foster greater knowledge about the environment and what can be done to protect it.

8 Sound Science, Improved Understanding Of Environmental Risk, And Greater Innovation To Address Environmental Problems

EPA will develop and apply the best available science for addressing current and future environmental hazards, as well as new approaches toward improving environmental protection.

9 A Credible Deterrent To Pollution And Greater Compliance With The Law

EPA will ensure full compliance with laws intended to protect human health and the environment.

10 Effective Management

EPA will establish a management infrastructure that will set and implement the highest quality standards for effective internal management and fiscal responsibility.

"Architecture" Of The Strategic Plan

Our Strategic Plan is constructed around these ten Goals and a series of supporting Objectives. The Goals/Objectives "architecture" serves as the underpinning not only of the Strategic Plan, but also for other management processes, such as budgeting and reporting on program progress. Using this common architecture allows us to link management functions such as planning, budgeting, and accounting to one another more directly. It also enables us to link cross-media programs to the environmental results they address. Here is a brief description of the components of the strategic architecture:

Goals. The ten long-range Goals described above comprise the basis for the strategic planning architecture.

Objectives. For each of these Goals, the Strategic Plan establishes two or more Objectives that identify the more immediate, measurable targets or results that the Agency plans to achieve over the next several years.

In nearly all cases, Agency managers have further defined the Objectives by identifying more specific targets to be achieved within a given time. While not part of the Strategic Plan, these "Sub-objectives" are important pieces of the planning architecture and help represent the Agency's work more precisely. See pages 9 and 10 for an example of the strategic architecture.

Revising The Strategic Plan

EPA's Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) is responsible for coordinating the Agency's strategic planning process and ensuring that our revised Strategic Plan reflects input from within and outside the Agency.

EPA's national program managers and regional managers will contribute to the revised Strategic Plan. Consultation with our state, tribal, and other federal agency partners is also fundamental to this effort. Headquarters programs and regional leads will have a vital role in developing our Strategic Plan and communicating with our partners. In addition, EPA is committed to involving other stakeholders—environmental and community groups, business and industry, and private citizens—in the strategic planning process.

You can find the complete Strategic Plan, which provides a full discussion of the ten Goals and the Objectives established under each, at <http://www.epa.gov/ocfopage/>. You may also order a copy by calling the National Center for Environmental Publications and Information (NCEPI) at 1-800-490-9198 and requesting publication number EPA/190-R-97-002.

Example of the Strategic Architecture

Goal 2: Clean & Safe Water

All Americans will have drinking water that is clean and safe to drink. Effective protection of America's rivers, lakes, wetlands, aquifers, and coastal and ocean waters will sustain fish, plants, and wildlife, as well as recreational, subsistence, and economic activities. Watersheds and their aquatic ecosystems will be restored and protected to improve human health, enhance water quality, reduce flooding, and provide habitat for wildlife.

Objective 2.1:

By 2005, protect human health so that 95% of the population served by community water systems will receive water that meets drinking water standards, consumption of contaminated fish and shellfish will be reduced, and exposure to microbial and other forms of contamination in waters used for recreation will be reduced.

Objective 2.2:

By 2005, conserve and enhance the ecological health of the nation's (state, interstate, and tribal) waters and aquatic ecosystems—rivers and streams, lakes, wetlands, estuaries, coastal areas, oceans, and ground waters—so that 75% of waters support healthy aquatic communities.

Objective 2.3:

By 2005, pollutant discharges from key point sources and nonpoint source runoff will be reduced by at least 20% from 1992 levels. Air deposition of key pollutants impacting water bodies will be reduced.

Sub-objective 2.1.1:

By 2005, the population served by community water systems providing drinking water that meets all 1994 health-based standards will increase to 95% from a baseline of 83% in 1994. 95% compliance will be achieved for any new standards within 5 years after the effective date of each rule.

Sub-objective 2.1.2:

By 2005, standards that establish protective levels for an additional 10 high-risk contaminants (e.g., disinfection byproducts, arsenic, radon) will be issued.

Plus additional Sub-objectives

Sub-objective 2.2.1:

By 2005, restore and protect watersheds so that 75% of waters support healthy watersheds as shown by comprehensive assessment of the nation's watersheds.

Sub-objective 2.2.2:

By 2005, and in each year thereafter, the work of federal, state, tribal, and local agencies; the private sector; hunting and fishing organizations; and citizen groups will result in a net increase of 100,000 acres of wetlands.

Plus additional Sub-objectives

Sub-objective 2.3.1:

By 2005, annual point source loadings from combined sewer overflows (CSOs), publicly-owned treatment works (POTWs), and industrial sources will be reduced by 30% from 1992 levels.

Sub-objective 2.3.2:

By 2005, nonpoint source sediment and nutrient loads to rivers and streams will be reduced. Erosion from crop land, used as an indicator of success in controlling sediment delivery to surface waters, will be reduced by 20% from 1992 levels.

Plus additional Sub-objectives